



**A WONDERFUL DAY IN THE LORD
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ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

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Good morning! We welcome you once again to our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're moving on to a new theme now. We've been in the book of Psalms for a long time enjoying all that is in that wonderful book. We're going to move on to a topic for a while. That topic is going to be God. That should be a topic we would expect to talk about because everything we believe, everything we stand for and everything we talk about here is wrapped around God. So, God is central to the Scriptures. He is central to our lives. I want to read some opening words from A.W. Tozer's wonderful book *The Knowledge of the Holy*. "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." That's an astounding statement. What comes to your mind when you think about God? When you just let the thought come to your mind and you use the word *God* and consider God, what comes to your mind? By nature, naturally, we don't think about the true God. Our minds are depraved in and of themselves without the Holy Spirit. We naturally have a distorted image of who God is. Only the Scriptures can enable us to understand who the true God is, so it's so important that we take a look at the Word of God to know about God. If the most important thing in our life is what we think about when we think about God, then it's very important that we think about Him rightly.

We'll start our studies together by looking at the names of God, especially in the Old Testament, because these kind of describe for us who God is. There are three primary names for God in the Old Testament. This is elementary to some of you, but perhaps new to others.

The first name is that of Yahweh, or Jehovah. In our English Bibles, it is usually translated in all caps as *LORD*. That is the word Yahweh or what we often call Jehovah. It means the self-existent One. It means the One who needs no one else. He is totally self-sufficient. He needs nothing or no one. We find for example in Genesis 2:4 he says, "This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven." *LORD God*, back-to-back, put together, the word *LORD* there is Yahweh or Jehovah, the self-sufficient One. It is a name exclusively describing the true God. It is used in the Bible of no one else. It is used only of the Lord Himself. It is basically His name.

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The second word is the word God which we find in that same verse. It is the word *Elohim* although in the Bible we find many derivatives of Elohim. The Lord of Hosts, for example. The Lord Almighty is another example. There are a lot of derivatives, but *Elohim* is the word, and it means the strong One or the Almighty One. God Almighty would be a derivative of Elohim. That word for God, *Elohim*, can be used for other creatures such as angels. False gods can be called gods, so the word itself is used for other beings outside of the true God. Whereas Jehovah or Yahweh never is.

If we go to Genesis 15:2, we run into a third word translated Lord, this time not in all caps. It's Abram that says, "O Lord GOD, what will You give me." There he puts together Lord and God, but if you look closely at your Bibles, you will see it's only capital L. That's *Adonai*. That's our third word for God in the Old Testament. It's a word that means master. So, when we find that word in the Old Testament, it's speaking of master. Often it speaks of God Himself, but sometimes it speaks of a human lord or human master, so it's not exclusively of God.

Those are the three main words for God, with Yahweh as the most important of those names.

In the New Testament, we also have three words we can look at. There's *Theos* which is translated as God. There's *Kyrios* which is translated Lord and is the equivalent of Jehovah and sometimes Adonai. Then we also have the Trinity. It speaks of Him there as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That also speaks of Him as God.

These are names that help us understand who He is, but it only gets us in the ballpark of understanding. We are going to look at some of the descriptions of God and what He is like tomorrow. I hope you can join us.

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Yesterday I opened our time together as we talked about God and began our study of God Himself by a quote from A.W. Tozer's book which reads, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." That's in the early pages of *The Knowledge of the Holy*. Here's another quote from that same book. He says, "We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God." I think that's a good point. If as our souls move toward that image of God, it moves toward what we think He's really like and the only way we can know what God is like is by looking into the Scriptures and seeing what the Scriptures say about Him. When we start doing that and looking at the characteristics or qualities of God, we're talking about what the theologians call attributes. That's because they're somewhat different from just characteristics. For example, I have a number of characteristics. I have physical characteristics and I have emotional and spiritual and mental characteristics that could describe me. Somebody might say that Gary is this and that, but when it comes to God, it's not quite like that. He has many attributes, but those attributes could not be broken up into parts as if He is a little bit of holiness, and a little bit of love, and a little bit of patience, and those types of things. When we do that, we begin to parcel and cut God up into pieces. That is not how Scripture describes God. God has numerous attributes that describe Him, but they're all who He is. They describe what He truly is. So, instead of saying the Lord is partly holy, partly love, partly patience, and partly justice. We say He is wholly love. God is holy. God is just. God is all these things, but each of these qualities, or attributes are totally defining God. We cannot parcel those up into pieces. When we do that, we change the character of God. That stretches our mind a little bit, but it also helps us to settle into the true nature of Almighty God.

So, we don't have one attribute of God that is greater than other attributes of God. Even though 1 John tells us that God is love, that doesn't mean that He is only love, but He is thoroughly love. Every ounce of His being is love. But then, Scriptures also say in more than one place that God is holy. It doesn't mean that He is holy, and He is love, it means that He is both wholly holy and wholly love. He is entirely and completely and fully holy and love and so forth as we go through qualities of His attributes. Keep that in mind as we think about it because we are looking at a being that is nothing like

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us. That's what is hard for us to grasp. God is wholly different from us. He is different. We really can't compare Him to anything. Scripture gives us pictures and metaphors of God that help us to get our grasp of Him a little bit. At the same time, none of these metaphors exhaust Him. He is fully beyond anything we can understand and comprehend and beyond our grasp of knowledge. That should be a wonderful thing to us. Not a fearful or frustrating thing. If we could really understand God and who God is, then we don't have much of a God. We have a God who is completely different from us. He is magnificent. He is unbelievable. He is beyond description.

So, we start out with that. We look at Deuteronomy 6:4, for example, when it says concerning God, "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God; the LORD is one!" So, I think that's what it's talking about here. The theologians call this the unity of the Godhead or simplicity in the sense that He is not capable of being divided up into parts. He is wholly One. That is what the Jews were taught right at first concerning the greatness of God. The Lord is One. There is One God and He is not divided up into parts. He is fully God in every aspect of His attributes. That gives us a great joy to know this inexplicable God who is beyond comparison, comprehension, and anything we can put in a box. This infinite God loves us so completely and so wholly that we can worship Him with all of our hearts and souls because of what He is, even though we don't understand every aspect of Him.

Beginning next week, we are going to start going into some of these attributes to help us understand as best we can the kind of God that we have. I hope you can join us, and I hope you are thrilled with what we learn together next week looking at some of these attributes.

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Thanks for joining us again on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast! We started last week, a couple sessions ago, talking about a new topic. The topic of God. We are going to pick that up again this week and go forward for several weeks looking at what we can know about God. There's nothing more important in our lives than to know who God is, what He does, and how He relates to us.

Again, quoting from A.W. Tozer's wonderful book *The Knowledge of the Holy* he said this, "I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God." Once again, I think he is right on target. Many of our issues in doctrine, almost all of our issues in doctrine, and the vast majority of our problems with our theology and our beliefs and how we live our lives will always be traceable back to our view of God. Our view of God will shape every aspect of our being. So, it's very valuable and important that we understand who God is. The only way we can really know God is through the Scriptures. Psalm 19, for example, and Romans 1 talk about the fact that there are certain attributes of God and aspects of His being that we can discover through general revelation, through nature and so forth there are certain things we can grasp. Those things are more general in nature. The fullness of understanding God has to come from His revelation to us. So, we are looking at what is known as attributes of God. That which makes up the qualities of who He is. In every one of these attributes, He is fully and totally what these attributes say He is. For example, when it says He is love, He is totally love, but He is also totally holy and so forth down the line.

Today we are going to look at the fact that He is infinite and eternal. We're going to lump those two together because we need to understand what kind of God we have and what God is really like. He is infinite and He is eternal. In Psalm 102, if you have your Bible, we're looking at Psalm 102:12 and it says, "But You, O LORD, abide forever, and Your name to all generations." So, we find that He is infinite. He's always been. He's beyond our comprehension. There are no limitations with God. We never come to a place where we exhaust the understanding of who He is or really totally comprehend who He is. He is simply far beyond our imagination and far beyond our explanations and our reasoning. All we know about Him is found

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in the revelation of Scripture. So, there are no limits with God. He reveals Himself in that way.

Now, kind of going along with that is Psalm 90:2 where we find that He is also eternal. These two kind of build on one another, "Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God." This verse takes us back to the beginning. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God..." "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth..." but when he says this, he is talking about the eternity of God who not only created the heavens and the earth, but he created time itself. That is beyond our comprehension. God is not a being of time. Time does not control God. He stands outside of time, and yet He interacts with time. He acts in our time. He acts with us in time. He is not interacting with us in the future or in the past, but right now at this moment. God enters into time for His relationship to us, but He's not bound by time. He is eternal and everlasting. So, we put these two together and we see there are no limits to God. We never exhaust Him. We never figure Him out totally. He is infinite.

Secondly, He is eternal. He's always been. Again, that's hard for us to grasp. How can something always be? Something has to always be, right? Even unbelievers believe that something has existed in some form going back forever. So, Scripture says that God has existed forever. He has always been. He is eternal. That means not only is He eternal going forward so that He never ceases to be, but He is eternal going back before our time began because He invented time itself. You and I are eternal, in a sense. Once we're born and come into form, we will never cease to exist in some form or another in the future. But we're not like God. We had a beginning. We had a time when we started. Not God. He has always been throughout all eternity, forwards and backwards and always will be. This is the greatness of our God and it's something for us to contemplate as we think about Him.

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August 15, 2023

Thank you again for joining us for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast! We are discussing the most wonderful of all topics: who God is. I started the last few sessions with quotes from A.W. Tozer's book *The Knowledge of the Holy*. I want to give another one that is found in his book, it goes like this, "The man who comes to the right belief about God is relieved of ten thousand temporal problems, for he sees at once that these have to do with matters which at the most cannot concern him for very long." That's an astounding statement. When we really understand God and the more we understand God, it relieves a whole lot of problems. None of us ever totally grasp the very fullness, nature, and inexplicable being of who God is. He's beyond our capacity to comprehend truly and fully, but we can comprehend Him up to the point He has revealed Himself to us. That's what we're trying to do together these mornings. We're trying to know who our God is.

I like what he says here though, if we have the right understanding about God and truly understand Him, that relieves us of a whole lot of other problems because a lot of things are folded into who God is, and a lot of things are dealt with properly when we understand the very nature of God Himself. So, these are important things for us to grasp at this point. Also, these things don't matter for very long to us. We all have problems. We do. We face problems in life. We all know that. Some of those problems are very concerning and important to us, yet at the same time we know that they're not eternal problems. They're resolved in God. If we know the Lord, He has forgiven us of our sins. He will ultimately take us to be with Him forever in a sinless environment where we are worshiping Him forever. So, all of our issues, no matter how grave they might be, are resolved in Him. So, that brings us to our subject today and that is the immutability of the Lord. That is that the Lord cannot and never will change.

Let me read a couple verses. I'm looking at James 1:17, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." We get the idea of a shadow. Shadows change with the movement of the sun, and so there's variation. The shadow is never the same moment by moment. With God, that's not true. There is no variation. There is no change in God. There is no

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shifting in God. He is absolutely unchangeable. That's a wonderful verse for us to note.

We look at Hebrews 1:10-12, and he talks about this as well, it says, "And, 'You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; they will perish, but you remain; and they all will become old like a garment, and like a mantle You will roll them up; like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.'" So, we observe a couple things. Yesterday we talked about God being eternal. That passage speaks about this. Everything that has been created will have an expiration date and it will cease to exist. But not God. God is eternal. He's always with us. Also, He does not change. He says, "But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end." So, He never changes, and that's a wonderful thought.

One more verse is Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." So, He is immutable. He is unchangeable. If you think about that for a moment, that is so different from us. We are very changeable. Physically, emotionally, spiritually, and so forth. We are just very changeable people. God is not. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. Think of how comforting that is to realize that God cannot change. God is a God who is never moody. He doesn't improve. He doesn't digress. He doesn't get more holy, loving, or less this, that, or the other. He is simply always the same and we should rejoice in that once we think it through a little bit. If He was a changeable God, the God we worship now would not perhaps have been the same God that was worshiped in Biblical times. Or, perhaps, in the future, He would change in some way and not be the same as He is now. That would be a devastating and awful thing to consider, wouldn't it? So, we want to realize how wonderful it is that God is immutable. He never changes. He's always the same, and when we go to Him and place our faith and trust in Him and pray to Him, He is the same God that ministered to us years ago and spoke to and ministered to people in the past and He will be for all of eternity.

This is a wonderful insight into the very nature of God. He is unchangeable. He is immutable.

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We are looking at the nature of God and this wonderful topic that we could spend forever contemplating. We can't worship God properly if we don't know who He is. Therefore, it's so important to know as much as we can know, as much as God has revealed to us, about who God really is.

One last quote from A.W. Tozer's great book *The Knowledge of the Holy* as we have opened each of our sessions on God so far. "The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him." That really is worth thinking about, isn't it? If the essence of idolatry, which the Scriptures warn us about repeatedly, is thinking about entertaining thoughts that are unworthy about God, that really ups the ante, doesn't it? I don't want to be thinking thoughts about God that are not true. I don't want my imagination to run wild with me and I invent my own God or let someone else do it for me through some other kind of literature or songs or whatever. I want to know who the true God is, and I want my thoughts about Him to be in line with what Scripture actually says about Him. Tozer is right on the money in all these quotes and in that great book *The Knowledge of the Holy* which I would recommend you read if you have not already done so.

We will look today at omnipresence. God is everywhere at once. That's another one of His attributes. There are three Omnis. There is omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence. We will look at all three of those this week. We will start with omnipresence in Psalm 139. If you're a faithful follower of our program here, you know it wasn't too many weeks ago that we went through Psalm 139, so there's some overlap with that, but I trust it is helpful as well even if it's much of the same material. It's so important to understand the fact that God is omnipresent. Psalm 139:7-12 says this, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, and the light around me will be night,' even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You." This is a powerful passage of Scripture. In this particular psalm, David is apparently either fleeing from the Lord or contemplating fleeing from the Lord. We looked at that a few weeks

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ago, but he knows enough about God to know that no matter where he might go, he cannot get away from God. Why anyone would want to get away from God is a problem. That goes back to understanding the true nature of the Lord. Anyone who really knows God will not want to flee from Him unless there is something in us that wants to flee – such as sin. The way to deal with that of course as David does here and throughout the psalms is to confess his sin and seek the Lord's forgiveness and be given that forgiveness. When we're in that kind of relationship with the Lord and appear before Him in that regard, cleansed before Him, nobody wants to flee Him, we want to be drawn to Him.

But as he looks at this, he realizes that to flee from God is impossible. There is no place he can go in heaven, on earth, under the earth, in the sea, in the light, or in the darkness. There is no place he can go where God is not. God's presence is already there, and that's an awesome thought to consider. Pantheism teaches that God is every *thing*. So, God is a stone. God is a cow. God is everything. Some other forms of Pantheism, Panentheism teaches that God is *in* everything. Kind of like penetrating that subject, but the issue of what Scripture teaches is that God is everywhere present. There's no place where He's not. He's not the same thing as a rock or a cow or anything else. He is separate from those things, but He is everywhere present. There is nowhere that you would be away from Him. Again, that is a wonderful thought. When David put it together, he realized how wonderful it was that he could always be with God. If he was isolated, if he was traveling, wherever he was, at home, God is with him.

When we contemplate that, it makes a lot of difference in our lives. Realizing that right now how we think, what we do, our actions, our thoughts, our emotions are all taking place in the presence of God. That will change the way we think and the way we live.

So, God's omnipresence is a wonderful attribute of God that we need to contemplate and live by.

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We're continuing our look at God Himself in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're looking once again at Psalm 139. As I said yesterday, I know a few weeks ago we went through Psalm 139 pretty thoroughly, but we're returning there because there is no place in Scripture that deals so carefully with at least two, if not all three, "omni" attributes of God – omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

Today we are looking at omniscience in the first verses of Psalm 139. We see that God knows all things. Nothing ever surprises Him. He is knowledgeable about all things. He is omniscient. Psalm 139:1-6 says, "O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O LORD, You know it all. You have enclosed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high; I cannot attain to it." Again, as we looked at this psalm some weeks ago, it would appear that David was actually not doing so well spiritually and was trying to get away from God and hide from God. Maybe this was in the midst of a sinful situation, and whenever we are in sin, why would we want to be near God? It's when we recognize His forgiveness that we draw near to Him and He forgives us and things clear up. If we're holding onto some sinful thought or action, we don't really necessarily want to be near God, but David recognized yesterday that everywhere he goes God is with Him. God is omnipresent. But also, He knows all things. There is nothing we're hiding from God. It's really kind of a ridiculous thing to consider that we can keep our thoughts to ourselves, and He won't know or that we can have some attitude that He doesn't process. Those kinds of things are rather ridiculous when we know who God is, which is what we're trying to accomplish here. When David looks at these things, he sees that the Lord knows everything about him. Even Psalm 139:3, "You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways." Nothing surprises the Lord, and nothing takes Him off guard. He knows the ins and outs of our lives.

He says in Psalm 139:6, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it." There's a level of which what David is saying is

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true of all of us. The understanding of God, as we have said several times in this series already, is just incomprehensible for human minds. We can't truly process the knowledge of God, the immutability of God, the omnipresence of God. All that God is. If you read A.W. Tozer's book *The Knowledge of the Holy* that we have been looking at you find that, in almost every one of those short chapters dealing with an attribute of God that, you come to the place where you in essence say there's more! There's so much more to know and explore and we can't get to the end of that, so here's as far as we go. David says that His knowledge is too wonderful for him and he can't totally grasp it, but that doesn't mean we can't appreciate it and love Him all the more for it and worship Him simply because we can't totally understand. As a matter of fact, this is the very reason that we do worship Him. These attributes we are looking at are things that should drive us to the end of ourselves, realizing we can only go so far, and to the infinite God that we know. He is the one that knows all things and is all places, and this God we worship! We fall down before Him with our hearts and our bodies and worship Him because of His absolute, immeasurable greatness. One of those is His infinite knowledge.

How wonderful it is that our God knows all things and we can rest and take great comfort in that truth. We are going to look at one more "omni" tomorrow – omnipotence. I hope you can join us.

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We close out our week where we began, talking about God and what we can know about Him. I trust that you are contemplating the greatness of God and who He really is as revealed in Scripture. We quoted A.W. Tozer's wonderful book *The Knowledge of the Holy*, but let me mention a few other books you might find very valuable and helpful if you're interested in going deeper:

1. A.W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*
This is a very steady and helpful book.
2. Dan DeHaan, *The God You Can Know*
This is more accessible and easier to read.
3. Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and the Attributes of God*
This is two volumes, around a thousand pages of reading. It's very deep. He's a Puritan. Deals with virtually everything and exhausts everything, kind of like the Puritans did. It's not a book for everybody, but for some of you that might be one you like to spend six months working through while trying to understand the Lord.
4. J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*
This not only deals with our knowledge of Him and what we can know about Him, but there's a lot of application as well to how we live our lives. That's possibly Packer's best book he ever wrote. It will be a classic for as long as time is around, I think. I encourage you to read that book.

If I had to choose two of these books, I would start with *The Knowledge of the Holy* and the second would be *Knowing God*, and then the other books are also very valuable. Of course, there are others that we could put in there as well.

We are looking at one more attribute of God today. We're looking at the three "omni" attributes. We have looked at omnipresence and omniscience. Today we are looking at omnipotence. If you have your Bible, turn to Matthew 19:26. Here Jesus speaks of God's omnipotence and the fact that

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He has all power. He says it in this way to some of the individuals He is talking to, "And looking at them Jesus said to them, 'With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" So, He doesn't use the word *Almighty* or *omnipotent*, but He makes very clear the great power of God and that all things are possible with God. Just contemplate that. There is nothing that God cannot do. There is nothing beyond His strength, wisdom, power, and knowledge. He is simply Almighty.

As a matter of fact, going to Revelation 19, the Lord is called directly *Almighty* fifty-six times. He is God Almighty. Sadly, people have used phrases like that as swear words. I don't think they understand what they're doing. If they understood who God is, they would shudder, and their knees would begin to knock to consider talking like that about God. What an awful blasphemy to speak of God or Jesus Christ in any form of swear words, but people do it all the time, which shows that they do not know God. That's what we're trying to look at together – the knowledge of the holy, the knowledge of God – so that we may really and truly know and understand Him.

To understand Him is to know that He is omnipotent. There is nothing He cannot do. The angels in Heaven in Revelation 19:6 said this, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns." here is one of the fifty-six times when He is called *Almighty*. He's called Almighty by the beings of Heaven who see Him more clearly than we do at this point because we're on Earth and they're in the heavenly realms with Him. They recognize that He is Almighty and at this particular point in time He is now going to reign over all of His kingdom. We might get around to talking about that a little later on, but the point is that they recognize His nature and His attributes. They recognize who He is and His omnipotence.

Sometimes people ask, "Is there anything God cannot do?" You can get kind of silly with that because people in the past have played around with that, but there are some things that Scripture says He cannot do.

1. He cannot lie. We know that from Hebrews 6:18.
2. He cannot tempt nor sin. We know that from James 1.

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In essence, He can't go against His own nature. The Lord will never contradict who He is. He will never act or be anything He is not. He can never change who He is. He is immutable, so He can't go against His nature. We are happy to know that God can never sin. God can never do wrong. God can never make a mistake. God is omnipotent and rules over all things. That leads us to the topic of the sovereignty of God which will be our subject next time. I hope you can join us next week. I look forward to it.

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August 21, 2023

We welcome you to another week of our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We have been going through the Scriptures and looking at various themes and topics together for quite some time to get our morning started off right before the Lord. The theme we are looking at right now is the theme of God. It's a very wonderful theme, and I hope you are getting a lot out of it.

We are looking at different attributes of God and the one we are going to spend 2-3 times together on this week is the attribute of sovereignty. God is a sovereign God. This is such an important part of the nature and essence of God that we want to take some time to slowly go through it and understand how wonderful it is that God is a sovereign God. This is something we should glory in. When we get up in the morning and look at our uncertain lives, we can look to the glory of God and know that He is sovereign and in charge of the day that is in front of us.

To be sovereign is the idea of supreme ruler over the universe. God is over all things. He is the ruler over all things. Nothing can thwart His will. Nothing can challenge Him. What a tragic and horrible idea it would be if God was not sovereign and there was an entity in the universe, a power, that could challenge Him in any way! That would be frightening, but that is not true. God is absolutely sovereign.

If you're a fan of Charles Spurgeon, you probably have heard and read many of his great quotes. I think one of the best, if not the best quote, that I have ever read by Charles Spurgeon has to do with sovereignty. It's a very long quote, so I'm going to break it up into the next three days or so and take pieces of it.

I'm going to start off by reading part of this quote. He said this in relation to his sermon in Matthew 20:15. He says, "There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's Sovereignty. Under most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. There's nothing for which the children ought more earnestly to contend than the doctrine of their Master

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over all creation – the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands – the Throne of God and His right to sit upon that Throne.” That’s the first part of that quote. It’s not the best part actually, but it’s a good start. We will look at more of it tomorrow.

Turning to Ephesians 1:11, we’re looking at a verse that talks about God’s sovereignty. The apostle Paul is actually including this in the opening prayer that he is giving to these people and showing them just how wonderful God is. He says, “also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.” As Paul looks at God, he is saying a number of things about what God has done and what Christ has done for us. He is pointing to the fact that we have all been predestined, determined by God according to His purpose and according to His will. Everything is ordained according to His will and His divine counsel. There is nothing that is happening in this universe that is escaping His notice and His sovereignty. Somehow, within all of that, God is sovereign even over sinful and evil things. God is never the author of sin, but He allows sin, right now, for His divine purposes. So, even sin. Even the devil is under His thumb at all times. Although He allows certain things to happen that are not righteous things, per se, they are ordained for His purposes.

I want to also take us to Daniel and one of the greatest statements in all of Scripture concerning sovereignty came from the mouth of a man who probably, at least early on, didn’t even know God. Nebuchadnezzar had been warned by God about his pride and arrogance, and he did not listen, and the Lord took him into insanity. After he came through that time, he finally turned to the Lord in Daniel 4:34, and he says this, “But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation. ‘All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What have you done?’” What a powerful statement depicting the sovereignty of our great God.

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I want to follow up on this tomorrow and look at some other Scriptures. I hope you can join us.

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August 22, 2023

If you were with us yesterday, you know that we are talking about the sovereignty of God this week. We looked at some Scriptures that depict the sovereignty of God, and we also had a quote by Charles Spurgeon, one of his greatest quotes in my opinion. The first part of that quote had to do with how God's people, those who know Him and know what He's really like, love the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. The attribute of God that He is the absolute ruler of the universe. He is sovereign. We love it. We can't get enough of it and we thank the Lord every day for His sovereignty. On the other hand, the unbeliever does not see it that way. So, I want to continue his quote and give a little more of it today.

He says this, "On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldings, no truth of which they have made such a football, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah." I think that's well said. The unbeliever does not enjoy or appreciate, in any sense, the sovereignty of God. They want to be free from God. Remember Psalm 2 where it speaks of unbelieving people that want to break His bands, His bonds. They want to be free. They don't want to be a servant of Christ. They don't want to be holding to God, so sovereignty holds no attraction to them. So, I think Spurgeon is correct about that, but whatever people want is not necessarily what is true. So, we see in Scriptures that God is sovereign whether we appreciate that or depreciate that.

In Isaiah 40, Isaiah is giving us a great section on the greatness of God in chapters 40-48, and there are some Scriptures here especially about the sovereignty of God that I want to read. In Isaiah 40:14 it says, "With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding?" Speaking of God. "And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge and informed Him of the way of understanding?" No one did, obviously. Isaiah 40:15-17, "Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. Even Lebanon is not enough to burn," that was a place of tremendous amounts of timber, and woods, and forest, "nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless." So, all the nations combined are nothing before God.

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Isaiah 40:18 says, "To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare with Him?" I love this section of Isaiah where he is showing us that anything anyone can come up with, is no comparison to Almighty God. His greatness, His sovereignty, His majesty is beyond compare. Isaiah goes on to talk about this more in Isaiah 41:10. He says, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely, I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." This is actually one of the favorite verses of many, many people because in our time of fear and anxiety we know we can turn to the One who is Sovereign and the One who is in charge of all things. We can be strengthened in that time of need. So, this verse speaks of the sovereignty of God and how we can draw such a great application to our own lives from that sovereignty.

In Isaiah 46:8-11 he also speaks on this same subject. "Remember this, and be assured; recall it to mind, you transgressors. Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it." There is no hesitancy whatsoever on the part of God. What He has planned will be accomplished. God chooses. God orchestrates. God controls, and all that He wants to have happen, happens and there is never any question or any doubt about His sovereignty over those things.

This is a marvelous thought. Once again, what a frightening thought it would be if there was any entity in the universe that could challenge the sovereignty of God, but there is none. There is nothing to compare Him to. What He plans, He accomplishes, and we praise Him for that.

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August 23, 2023

Yesterday we were looking at the sovereignty of God in reference to some Scriptures in Isaiah 40. We're returning to Isaiah 40 today and looking at a little bit more of what Isaiah is saying about God's sovereignty and especially how that can be applied to our own lives.

I want to start off once again by continuing this rather long quote by Charles Spurgeon concerning the sovereignty of God. The first part of the quote talked about how much His people appreciate and enjoy the fact that He is sovereign. The second part shows how unbelievers do not appreciate and do not enjoy or want the sovereignty of God. Then he goes on with his quote. This is the part that I think is the most interesting. He says, "Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow Him to be in His almonry to dispense His alms and bestow His bounties. They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures then gnash their teeth." I think he has really captured the essence of how unbelievers see the sovereignty of God. They are very happy to see God at work in things that don't affect their lives. So, he mentions a number of things such as fashioning the creation, being over different aspects of that creation. They appreciate God's providence when it works in their favor, but when it comes to the idea that God is absolutely in control, He has ascended His throne, then His creatures who don't know Him gnash their teeth. I think he is absolutely right. People do not want to hear about the sovereignty of God if they don't love Him and they don't want to hear about the sovereignty of God, and they don't know that He loves them. The good news is that Scripture speaks very differently than the world thinks, and the Lord in His sovereignty loves us supremely. Because He loves us supremely, His sovereignty is a great blessing to us all.

We're looking at Isaiah 40 to see this. We saw some passages there yesterday concerning God's sovereignty, but He applies all this over in Isaiah 40:28-31. This is a section of Isaiah that many people know, at least parts of it, and appreciate and enjoy. But I really want to put it in context of His sovereignty here at this point. He says, "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth

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does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable." We start with the fact of who God is in His sovereignty, His power, and His magnificence. So, the groundwork is laid for the nature of God and who God really is.

Now he wants to move into this section dealing with the application of this truth. If God is who Isaiah says He is, this great God with all this strength, then what does that mean to us? Well, in Isaiah 40:29, we see what God is, He desires to share with us. It says, "He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power." He wants to share with us His strength. God is sovereign. God is in control, but He shares with us His strength. Especially, He has in mind, the weary. Those who are tired, struggling, and not doing well right now, He wants to strengthen us because of His sovereignty.

He goes on to Isaiah 40:30, "Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly." So, he's looking at the best of us, the young people. The strong ones with a lot of energy. He says that they also grow weary, and they also get tired and stumble.

Isaiah 40:31, "Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary." What a promise our sovereign Lord gives us here. Those who wait on Him, and he's not just talking about passively waiting, but an active trust in Him, what are they given by this sovereign Lord? New strength! They don't have the strength in themselves, God gives them the strength. They "mount up with wings like eagles," eagles fly on the currents of the winds that other birds are battered down by, but they ride on those currents, and they are able to soar over those things. They do not get tired. Even people in shape will eventually get tired, but they are so energized by the sovereign God that "they will run and not get tired." "They walk and not become weary," the long-distance walking can wear us down, but those who are waiting on God, and because of His sovereignty and His purposes, it says they do not become weary.

So, even for those that are tired and those that are weary because we believe in the sovereignty of God, we're able to draw from His power and live a life that He has for us. This is a special verse for those that are tired, weary, and

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struggling. Our Lord gives us the sustenance that we need because He has that power to do so because He is sovereign.

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August 24, 2023

The last few days we have been looking at the sovereignty of God. It's one of the great attributes of God that we camped out on for a little bit. I'm going to read the final portion of a quote by Charles Spurgeon. We have read portions the last three days and we will finish it up right now. This is, in my opinion, perhaps, one of his greatest quotes from a man who's very quotable, so this is a good one. It's a big one. It's a long one, so we've broken it up into four different sections.

Concerning the sovereignty of God, he started out by showing how much we love the Lord and appreciate His sovereignty. Secondly, he showed those that don't love the Lord and don't know the Lord are resistant to His sovereignty. Then, yesterday we saw how even the unbeliever appreciates God's providence in certain circumstances, but not when He mounts His throne and proclaims Himself as the absolute ruler over them and the universe. They're not liking that so much. Now we have finished the quote, and whether they like it or not, here's how the believers should proclaim the excellencies and sovereignty of God. He says, "and [when] we proclaim an enthroned God, and His right to do as He wills with His own, to dispose of His creatures as He thinks well, without consulting them in the matter; then it is that we are hissed and execrated, and then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on His throne is not the God they love. But it is God upon the throne that we love to preach. It is God upon His throne whom we trust." Despite what unbelievers say or think about the sovereignty of God, we proclaim it because this is the God we love to proclaim. This is the God we want the world to know about because it is the true God and we do not want to disguise in any sense His magnificence. So, the sovereignty of God has been on the table, and we have now finished the quote by Charles Spurgeon. We are going to move on a little bit to speak of another aspect of His sovereignty and that is His wisdom. It's not so much that it's the same thing, but they are connected. We're moving now to what we might call communicable attributes of God. Up until now, we have looked at incommunicable attributes. That means certain aspects and features of His essence are not things we can possess. We're not omniscient, omnipotent, or omnipresent. We are not sovereign. God is those things. We're not those things, but there are certain other attributes of God that we participate in to a certain degree, although certainly not to the degree that God does.

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One of those is His wisdom. In Romans 11, Paul is absolutely enamored with the wisdom of God, and he completes Romans 11 with these words, Romans 11:33-36, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the LORD, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." I've always been impressed with this passage of Scriptures because the great apostle Paul, the receiver of Revelation that he wrote down in the Scriptures and passed on to us, that very one was so overwhelmed with the wisdom and greatness of God when he comes to the end of that chapter that he really can't express it. He just pours it all out from his heart and is just amazed by God's wisdom and greatness.

As we go to James 1, there is an application of that wisdom. We see the wisdom of God and we can appreciate that. We worship God for that, but God wants to share His wisdom with us. In other words, He wants us to also grow in the knowledge and wisdom that He supplies. In James 1:5, in a well-known verse, he says, "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." Now, you and I often lack wisdom, we know that. But the Lord who is the God of all wisdom tells us that if we lack wisdom, we can call upon Him for wisdom and He has promised to give that to us if we ask in faith.

So, this is one of the attributes of God that we appreciate so much. We're so glad He is willing to share, at least a portion, of that attribute with us in the form of wisdom. We thank Him for that.

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August 25, 2023

As we come together again in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast looking at some of the attributes of God, we are turning to one that is kind of unique. It's the attribute of holiness. It is the only attribute of God where it says in Scripture that He is holy three times in the same passage. In Isaiah 6, and also in Revelation, on two different occasions, He is declared, "Holy, Holy, Holy." No other attribute of God has that distinction. That does not mean that holiness is His primary attribute because we can't divide God up in that way, but we can say it is a key attribute of God. There is no God of the Scriptures unless He is a holy God. So, it's imperative that we understand His holiness to us, and His holiness in His essence.

In Isaiah 6, in this well-known passage we often turn to when we think of a great worship service, Isaiah is in the temple of the Lord, and he is a witness to a great experience that day of the worship of God by holy angels. Actually, they are called seraphim in Isaiah 6:2, and these seraphim have six wings. With two they cover their face, with two their feet, and with two they flew. It speaks of this one particular seraphim.

Then it says in Isaiah 6:3, "And one called out to another," so there is more than one here and they're calling back to one another, but they're not talking about menial things, they're not even talking about themselves. They're talking about the God who is on the throne. That's the picture that Isaiah has and the picture he gives us. It says in Isaiah 6:3, "And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." No wonder this is a passage that we often turn to when we think about worshiping God. It's a great worship service, but it's not a service of humanity. Men are not worshiping God at this point, although we see later on that Isaiah Himself falls down and worships God, but it's a worship service in Heaven. The angels who know the most about God and see Him most clearly are praising Him in a magnificent way for His holiness. "Holy, Holy, Holy." "The whole earth is full of His glory."

Isaiah falls down in 6:5 and says, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King the LORD of hosts." So, he is overwhelmed by this

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experience, what the seraphim are saying, the greatness of God, and His holiness.

Holiness means separation. It's the idea that the Lord is not like us. He is different from us. We can never be like Him. He is different from us. It also speaks of purity. A moral purity on the part of God. He is without sin. He is totally righteous.

We find the second time He is called holy three times in Revelation 4:8. Once again, the angels are involved in this worship service. This time, the apostle John is privy to this service and we see this after the Lord has just finished talking to the seven churches of Asia and John has recorded those things. Then we have this worship service in chapter 4. This is another great and powerful worship service. John hears the angels and the four living creatures calling out to God at this point in verse 8. He says, "And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.'" Now, these living creatures have a very similar look to the seraphim that we find in Isaiah. Perhaps they are seraphim. That really doesn't matter to us too much right at this point. The point is what they're doing in this worship service in Heaven is once again calling out the holiness of God. That's the attribute they're focusing on. Once again, three times they say, "Holy, Holy, Holy."

In Revelation 4:11 it says, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created." This holy God has created all things. The very creatures of heaven who know Him the best and understand Him in ways that we still can't understand can't get over the holiness of God, and they praise Him for it.

The more we know Him, the more we too will praise Him and worship Him because He is our holy God, and we can worship Him as our Holy God. We too, can grow in the holiness that He gives us in the righteousness of Christ. These are great things to consider this weekend as we think about the wonder of God.

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August 28, 2023

Welcome once again to another week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast! We're looking at God Himself and His attributes. We are going to spend two more weeks on this subject. We're going to look at five more attributes of God, that which makes up the very essence of God Himself as revealed in Scripture. These are going to be what theologians call communicable attributes. That is, not only does God have these attributes, but He calls on us to follow those attributes ourselves. Now, God has these attributes in perfection. They're perfected and perfect in Him. The best it could possibly be. Obviously, that's not true of us, but He calls on us to imitate Him in this sense and to be like Him in this sense to the degree that is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

So, these are attributes that God, in a sense, shares with us. Not that we in any sense take part in God Himself, but this is what He is, and this is what He has called us to be. So, we're going to look at an attribute today. Then tomorrow, we will look at how the Scriptures call us to follow in these footsteps of God. We will do that for the next two weeks with these five attributes.

The first one we're going to look at is God's righteousness, or His justice. This is one of those attributes that everyone's all excited about until it affects them personally. We want fairness and equality. We want people to treat us right. We want justice in all areas, but when it comes to us, personally, we're not always so sure we want the justice of God in our life because in reality, the justice of God, if it was purely justice alone and not anything to do with His mercy and grace, would destroy us. We deserve the punishment and judgment of God that is part of His justice. Fortunately, His justice is balanced by His mercy and His grace, but God is just. God is righteous, and we appreciate that in Him and we're glad that the standard of rightness and the standard of justice is in God. Everything He does is right. Everything He does is purely just. There's nothing He does that is not just. So, He is the standard of all justice. This, of course, springs out of His holiness. Because He is a holy God, He is also a righteous God and a just God.

Let's look at a few passages of Scripture that teach this. Acts 17:31 says, "because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness

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through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." So, the proof of the righteousness of God is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but "He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness." So, the day will come when God judges the whole world, and it will be judged in pure righteousness. His judgment will not be flawed. It will not be wrong. It will not be tainted by any bribery or power of some other being. His justice is right.

Let me go to another passage with you, Psalm 19:9, he says, "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgements of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether." God's judgments are always true. This is the greatest thing. We have, perhaps, the greatest court system in the world today here in America, yet we know it's not a perfect system. As a matter of fact, we often complain about the bias that might be there and the injustice of our justice system. God's judgments, however, are always true. They're always righteous. They're never wrong.

I want to look at Revelation 16:5-6, "And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things; for they poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it." So, in this passage of Scripture, we see that God's righteousness and His justice is mediated out toward those who deserve it, those who have spilled the blood of the martyrs, the saints of God. God will not let that go on forever. He will judge those people and He will judge righteously, and they deserve exactly what God gives them. God's judgments are righteous and true and perfect altogether without flaw.

We thank the Lord for that. He sets the standard of what is right and just and righteous. Tomorrow we will look at how we are to imitate that kind of justice and righteousness. I trust you can join us.

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August 29, 2023

If you were with us yesterday on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, you know we're talking about the attributes of God and these communicable attributes in which God Himself is setting the perfect standard of these attributes. These attributes make up His essence. These are the kind of attributes that God calls for us to imitate ourselves. Not that we could ever come to the standard of God's essence and perfection, but that we are called as His followers, as His people, to become like Him and to live as His people demonstrating some of these characteristics and attributes of God.

The one we looked at yesterday was righteousness. God is righteous. God is just. His righteousness is always true. There is never any flaw. There's never any taint of sin or bribery on the part of a powerful person who can sway the justice of God. That just cannot happen with God. He is far beyond anything like that. Because God is just and righteous and we are His people if we know Christ as our Savior, then He calls us to a certain standard of life that is patterned after Himself. That is true in the area of righteousness and justice.

There are a lot of places in Scripture that I think we can go to in order to look at that for ourselves, but I want to look at a book in Scripture that is probably seldom read by most people, and that is the Old Testament minor prophet of Micah. This is an Old Testament passage in the back of your Bible, and we come to what are probably the most familiar verses of Micah, especially today. As a matter of fact, the reason why these verses in chapter 6 are pretty well known, I think, is because they are often misused. The verses are used often to talk about the Christian life being a social agenda or social gospel. God is calling us to the very essence of Christian life in these verses. This is what the Christian life is all about and this is the mission of the church and the mission of the Christian. We are to do what these verses will teach us. As we look at them together, I want to say, this is not the calling of God's people in the sense that this is the very highest thing we do as Christians. As a matter of fact, as we look at Scripture in its whole, we find that we are called to tell people about Jesus Christ, disciple them for Him, and we're called primarily to give Him glory in all that we do so that everything we do, including what we see today, is done for the glory of God. So, these verses are sometimes misused to basically reduce the Christian life

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to these standards of justice. The right use of these passages and verses we will read is that these are calling us to demonstrate the justice and righteousness of God because He has saved us. Because He has changed us, our lives should evidence His justice and His fairness and the way we treat other people as a result.

So, let's look at these verses together. Micah 6:6-7, "With what shall I come to the LORD and bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He is coming to the Lord and is saying there are many magnificent things he can do, especially in the Old Testament context, of sacrifices and so forth. These are things God called them to do in the Old Testament, so they're not wrong in and of themselves, but he moves on to Micah 6:8, and he's showing that the real essence of following the Lord is not in the sacrificial system, but in the life that we live that demonstrates the life of Christ in us. It says, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" He is saying that if we have Christ in us and God is truly in us and we're trying to please Him and walk in His pattern and glorify Him, then we're going to treat other people as God treats us. Verse 8 tells us that we are going to do that which is good.

We are going to look at the goodness of God tomorrow, I believe. What does He require of you? Here it is in a nutshell: do justice! Be fair with other people whether they're rich or poor, weak or powerful. Live out justice. Love kindness. Go out of your way to be kind to people, especially those who often do not experience kindness from people. Walk humbly before Him. We are not too proud and arrogant people. We are to be humble people before God because we recognize that before Him, we are nothing. But because He has blessed us with His own justice and fairness, and love, and mercy, we are humbled before Him so that we share the humbleness of God with other people. We live humbly before others because we live humbly before God because we know of what He has given us in His righteousness.

That is the pattern we are to follow.

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August 30, 2023

Thank you for joining us for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. As we are examining some of the attributes of God, we are looking today at the attribute of His goodness. We could talk a long time about the various facets of the goodness of God.

Psalm 34:8 says, "O taste and see that the LORD is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!" The very fact that God is good is demonstrated throughout Scripture. Not only in proclamations such as this one, but as we follow the narrative stories and accounts of God's people in all sorts of situations where they need a taste of the goodness of God, we find that happening over and over and over again among the people of God. We also see that in our own experiences as well as we walk with Christ and live for Him we experience, on a very regular basis, the goodness of God. Some of us don't recognize that and that's always a problem. A lot of people don't see God's goodness and blame God for certain things in their life that didn't go well. They don't think God has come through for them, so they even turn against Him and sometimes they become bitter. But the goodness of God permeates every aspect of creation and every aspect of our lives. The world would be virtually Hell, in a literal sense, if it wasn't for the goodness of God. So, we are so thankful for that.

Under the umbrella of the goodness of God there are a number of features we can showcase. We will look at three of those right now in the book of Romans. First of all, there is His grace. In Romans 5:15 it says, "But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ abound to the many." This passage is saying that if it wasn't for the goodness of God, manifested in His grace in giving us that which we do not deserve, then all of us would continue in our sins and be eternally lost. So, the grace of God is a demonstration of His goodness. It's one facet of His goodness.

Going to Romans 12:1, we come to a rather well-known verse to us as Christians, and it talks about another aspect of God's goodness and that is His mercy. "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your

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spiritual service of worship." Here he calls on us to present our bodies to Him, to live for Him, to dedicate ourselves to Him on the basis of God's mercy. So, I see mercy as a flip side of grace. It's God giving us what we don't deserve in the times of our greatest need. Perhaps at the time when we are at our lowest point and desperate for a touch of His goodness God reaches out to us in His mercy to provide for us what we, again, don't deserve and to not give us what we do deserve. That is His mercy. It all flows from the very facet of God's attribute of goodness.

Looking at Romans 2:4, there are a number of aspects of God's goodness that show up here. It says, "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?" There are several things here that we can appreciate. We shouldn't think lightly of His riches and of His kindness. So, we see God's kindness here poured out for us. That's part of His goodness. His tolerance. He puts up with us. Sometimes it's hard for us to put up with ourselves. It's hard for other people to put up with us. So, you can imagine the infinitely, perfect God having to put up with sinful people and how difficult that must be, yet in His tolerance and His goodness, He puts up with us. Patience is another aspect of His tolerance. Putting up with our failure and our waywardness time, after time, after time, after time. Yet He does so.

Why does He do that? Well, it says, "the kindness of God leads you to repentance." The very nature of the goodness of God and how He interacts with us and graces us and mercies us and gives us His kindness and goodness; these things are to lead us to a place of true repentance and turning to Him because we see that the only one worthy of our following is God Himself, who is good. What an attribute that is. Tomorrow we are going to look at how we should demonstrate something of the goodness of God in our own lives. I hope you can join us.

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August 31, 2023

Yesterday on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, we enjoyed looking at the attribute of God, that we are calling goodness, and its many features and facets of mercy, grace, patience, tolerance, and kindness all rolled up in the attribute of God's goodness. What a precious and beautiful attribute of God that is, but God also calls us to be like Him. He calls on us to exhibit that type of goodness in the lives of others. Certainly not to the extent that He does. Not to the perfection that only He can do, but certainly we are following in His footsteps. We want to be like God in every way that we possibly can. That's something God calls us to do.

We are looking at Galatians 5 & 6 today to see what that looks like. In Galatians 6:9-10, it says this, "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. So, He calls on us to behave with goodness toward other people. In the context here, he's saying it's easy to lose heart. Sometimes we do good. We do things that we think are right and good toward other people, but it doesn't work out very well. They don't accept our goodness; they don't appreciate it. Sometimes people even turn on us. Sadly, one of the things that happens in the human experience is for people that were good and gracious and merciful toward us turn on us. That shouldn't overly surprise us when we know that the world has turned on Christ who showed the ultimate goodness to humanity and the ultimate kindness. Yet, people spurn Him and turn on Him. So, it happened to Him, and it will happen to us. Nevertheless, it says not to give up or lose heart and continue to show goodness to those and don't grow weary in that process.

Do good to all people he says, not just the people that are easy to do good to. Not just to the ones that are kind themselves and reciprocate, but also to all people, even those who can't show us or don't show us good. He also says, "especially...of the household of the faith." So, he's talking about God's people. We should go out of our way especially to show God's goodness to His people, our fellow believers in Christ.

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That's all well and good. This is an attribute we're to follow up on and try to live out and be good like He is good, but we also know that in and of ourselves, just to set that standard "I'm going to be good" isn't going to cut it, is it? I can try to be good, and I can do some good things, but I'm going to always fall short of that in my own energy and power. So, it's very helpful to know as we back up to Galatians 5 that this attribute of God that is called goodness is also a fruit of the Spirit. That is, that God's Spirit, as He lives in us, begins to produce and manifest the features of Christlikeness in us as He matures us and grows us and shapes us in those directions.

So, what we call the fruit of the Spirit is in Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." Who would make a law against these facets of the fruit of the Spirit? There are nine of them here. One fruit, nine different parts of it that show forth here. We're fairly used to the first three: love, joy, and peace. Not so much with patience and so forth, but kindness and goodness show up here. As God is kind and good to us, so we are called to be kind and good to others. When it says in Galatians 6 to let us not grow weary, show goodness to all people and especially to fellow believers, the household of God, that's something I think all true believers should desire to do and will want to do. If God's spirit is in us, then it will become a natural factor and desire in our hearts to do good to other people. It may be hard sometimes, we know that, yet there is that natural desire to live out the Christian life in such a way that we are showing goodness to fellow believers and other people as well.

We're so grateful that this is also part of the fruit of the Spirit. We are energized and empowered and enabled to show goodness because God's spirit is in us. In and of ourselves, just to turn over a new leaf and some moral desire to be good, would be more of a legalistic standard, but the fact that the Lord energizes us and enables us to be this way is just evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, God's work, in our lives.

So, God is good, and He calls us to goodness as well. He gives us the energy and the power to live out that kind of a life. We're so grateful for that. That should give us a wonderful day in the Lord.

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September 1, 2023

Today we are going to look at another attribute of God. The attribute of truth. What a wonderful thing that God is true and the truth. Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life," not simply that He came to give us a way to God and a standard of teaching about truth and eternal life. He did that, but He calls Himself the embodiment of the way the truth and the life. Christ, as God, represents what God is like. There is no difference between the godhead in these attributes. Every attribute we're looking at describes the very essence of God and the very essence of every member of the Trinity, so that God is true, and Christ is true and the Holy Spirit is true. The aspect of truth is a very precious one to us.

I want to look at Romans 3:3, it says, "What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?" Our unbelief and our sin, our rejection of God, or turning against God, none of them ever undermines the faithfulness of God. Nothing could undermine His faithfulness. Nothing can change Him from being the faithful God He is to something else. He's never anything but what He is.

It goes on to say this, Romans 3:4, "May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar." So, no matter how unfaithful or how untruthful or how false people might be, it doesn't change the essence of God. God is true. He's true to Himself. No matter what is true of humanity, or people. No matter what they do. No matter how untruthful or unfaithful they are, God never is changed by that. He cannot be affected by that. So, when we say God is true, then He is consistently true. There is no aspect of falsehood within Him. He is the very standard of truth.

If you want to look at what truth is – people talk about that – remember Pilot said to Jesus, "What is truth?" Well, God is truth. Jesus is truth. So, he was looking at truth even as he said that because he didn't comprehend what truth was. Truth is found in God. He is the very essence, the very standard of truth.

His promises cannot fail. He can never go back on His word. He can never be unfaithful as we've seen. He can never be anything less than truthful. That also means He never disappoints. There's never a time when the Lord

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disappoints us because He is always true to what He is. He never tells us He'll do something that He doesn't do. He never gives us a promise He cannot or will not fulfill. We may be disappointed with God, but it's only because we have misunderstood God in some ways.

Many years ago, a rather well-known Christian author Philip Yancey wrote a book *Disappointment with God*. Immediately, I repelled against that title. I think he was trying to make a point, but I don't think he started out very well. It is impossible for us to be disappointed with God if we think God has disappointed us. Certainly, we disappoint Him. Certainly we can misunderstand Him. But God could never disappoint us because He is always true.

I think another way we can show that is true is in the greatest prayer ever recorded in all of history in John 17. We sometimes call this Jesus' High Priestly Prayer. He's praying for us, but He is also telling us about God. In John 17:3, in this great prayer, He says, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." This is eternal life – to know the true God. When we know the true God and the one sent by the true God, Jesus Christ, then we are understanding something about truth.

In John 17:17 of this great prayer, He says, "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth." So, He goes further. He wants the disciples in this particular prayer to be set apart, sanctified, by God in truth. Setting them apart in truth. They will be so different from everybody else in the world because they will be ambassadors of truth. Set them apart for that. How will they know the truth? What will be their message? He says, "Your word is truth." So, set them apart by giving them the very word that comes from You. The word that comes from the One who is true, and that word will always be truth. And they will go out proclaiming truth to all of humanity.

This is the message that we have. The message that God is truth. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of truth, and His word is true. That we have in Him.

Next time, I want to look at how we are to live out the essence of God's truth.

September 4, 2023

If you've been following along in our little series on God, you know that we have been looking at some of His attributes together. We're looking at the communicable attributes right now. These are attributes that are true of Him in perfection that He also calls on us to follow. Because we are in Him, and because He is in us, these particular abilities should also be manifested in us. Again, not in perfection, but there should be evidence that He is in us because of these things. The one we're looking at now is truth. Last time, we looked at the fact that God is true and that He is faithful. He can never deny Himself. He can never disappoint. He is always true. He is the standard of truth. He sets His disciples apart in truth as we saw in John 17. He gives us His word, which is true, to go out and proclaim that word to other people because what we have is the very finality, the completeness of truth, that God has revealed to us today is found in His Word and in Him. We see that we are also to be manifesting that truth. How are we to live out the truth of God that is in Him that also should be found in us to a lesser degree?

I want to look at the book of Ephesians for a little bit. Looking at Ephesians 4:15 he talks about living out this truth in two different ways in this same chapter. In verses 14-15 he says, "As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head even Christ." The Lord doesn't want His people to be pushed around like a wave on the sea, back and forth and up and down, by all the falsehoods that are around us and all the deceitful scheming and all the trickeries of man and of the devil. He wants us to have a solid grounding in truth. So, he speaks here in Ephesians verse 14 that we have this grounding and truth in Him. Then he tells us to share that truth with others. So, not only do we have that truth in and of ourselves because of God's Word, but we speak the truth in love. What he means in this context is that the way we help one another in our daily walk and our Christian endeavor is that we speak truth into the lives of one another. Not opinions and ideas and conspiracy theories or what someone else is saying, but what He has taught us in His Word. The Word of truth.

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One of the best ways we can help one another in our Christian life in sharing with one another is to share truth. If they're being deceived as verse 14 says or being led astray, we bring them back by sharing the truth of God's Word. It doesn't have to only be in the context of being deceived or drifting. In our everyday life, we can just share the truth of God's Word and testify of the greatness of Himself and what He has taught. Share what God has taught you in your morning time in the Word, and share with one another the greatness of God in our own personal lives. These things are very, very important. One of the ways that we demonstrate the truth of God is by sharing that truth with one another. Speaking the truth in love.

We look at Ephesians 4:25 and we have a little different context here. He says, "Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." This is a little different. Yes, it's very important that we share the truth of God with one another, speaking the truth in love. It's important that we speak both truth and do it in love. That's part of what he just said. So, we are speaking the truth and doing it with the attitude of love. We're not trying to beat someone down or beat someone up. We're not being judgmental. We are speaking to people the truth because we love them and we're doing so with the methodology: in the manner of love. We're not being harsh. We're speaking in love. In verse 25, he's speaking a little differently. He's talking here in this context of how we're helping one another once again, but we're also wanting to be very fair, honest and truthful with them in the way we deal with them in life.

When he says we lay aside speaking falsehood, that means we're not lying to one another or exaggerating or boasting about ourselves. We're not being false. We're being transparent, vulnerable, and true. We're doing that and speaking truth to each one with his neighbor. This is when we lay aside the exaggerations, falsehoods, almost truths that tend to pop into our lives because of our flesh, we lay those aside and then we speak to one another in truth so that we're being honest before one another. This comes in very frequently with our relationships with one another. How do we relate to one another? In truth. Transparently. Honestly. Giving of our true heart to them. This is what God has done for us. This is what we should do for others. So, God is true, and we are to live out that truth.

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Well, if you've been with us for our study of God and the attributes of God here recently, we're going to look at two more attributes before we're done. We'll also take the time to apply those attributes to ourselves, as these are attributes that we call communicable attributes. God has these attributes in absolute fullness. The very essence of God are these attributes, but He also calls for us to imitate and follow after Him with some of these attributes or characteristics.

The one we're looking at today is probably the best known and most familiar to people. God is love. As a matter of fact, we're looking at 1 John 4 where we find that statement. If you ask someone what God is like, I think a lot of people would go straight to this verse. Even if they couldn't find the verse itself, they know about this verse. They've heard it and if they had to pigeon-hole God according to one attribute or characteristic, they would say that God is love. Sometimes we press that too far as if God is only love. As if He's not any of these other attributes we have looked at together. But that would go too far. God is more than just love, but He's nothing less than love. He is fully and completely love. So, it is true to say that God is love, but God is also holy, just, and faithful. Never in pieces, always together.

Let's look at 1 John 4:8 for a moment. He says, "The one who does not know love does not know God, for God is love." There is our verse. 1 John 4:9-11, "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." So, we have interwoven here both the attribute of love, that God is love, and also application to us as the followers of the Lord.

Today, let's stay on the first portion of this, the fact that God is love. Love is one of those things that is really very hard to actually define. The best description of love in Scripture is probably in 1 Corinthians 13, but there's not a real definition there. It's a description. When someone says, "I love you" or we say to someone else, "I love you", what do we mean by that? I think it's hard for us to actually define what that really means to us and to other people. Sometimes I get irritated as I watch something like the Oscars

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or some kind of award show and somebody wins the prize. They get up front, and in their excitement, they shout out that they love everybody there and they just love those people so much and so forth. I've always thought that was pretty cheesy because in reality, this person knows hardly anybody in that room. They certainly don't love them. What do they really mean when they say things like that? They're talking about the enthusiasm of the moment and the excitement of what they have just received. That's not biblical love, and that's not the essence of love.

The essence of love, as defined here about God, moves into not just emotions and feeling, although I certainly don't think it's devoid of that. There are three Greek words in the New Testament that could be translated *love*. *Eros* which speaks of a more physical type of love. *Phileo* which usually speaks of fondness or friendship. *Agape* which is the highest form of love and the kind of love we're talking about here. It is unselfish and giving love. You can't totally separate even those words and say that they're in three different compartments.

But when we look at love, that God is love, we're going beyond the feelings and emotions, and we see God's love in His actions. That's how it's described in these verses. 1 John 4:9, "By this the love of God was manifested," or we see it, "in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him." We see the love of God because of what God has done. The essence of God's love is it gives. It gives the perfect gift in Jesus Christ Himself.

In 1 John 4:10 it says, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." God's love is seen in the giving of Christ. I also think of Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." There's our perfect example of love. God loved those who did not love Him. God loved those who rebelled against Him. God loves those who are His enemies. God loves, not because we love Him, but because of the very nature of His being. God shows that love in what He has done for us, principally and most supremely, in the sending of Jesus Christ for us. How we rejoice in the love of God!

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September 6, 2023

Yesterday on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, we looked at the attribute of God that we call love. As I said yesterday, that's probably the attribute that most people would pinpoint if they were trying to describe God. If they were listing the attributes of God, all that we have said over the last few weeks. Knowing that God is all these different things and not parceled up into pieces, that God is totally and completely, love, faithful, merciful, just and kind, all these different things. Yet, if someone was going to try to make a hierarchy of God's attributes, virtually everybody starts with love. Some might start with holiness, but that's not the way Scriptures lays this out for us. God is not a little bit of love and a little bit of holiness and a little bit of justice. God is all of those things to the -nth degree, all rolled up into one being described as the very essence of God Himself. It's hard for us to imagine somebody like that, but then again, we can never get to the full understanding of God Himself.

We're looking at the attribute of the love of God. This is a communicable attribute. God is the full essence of love, but He calls on us, His followers, to follow in His footsteps in some of these attributes. One of those is love. We're in 1 John 5:1-4 where he is talking about this attribute of love and our relationship to it. He says, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith."

Now, he talks again about the love of God here for us. He says that God is love, that's His very nature. We've seen that. But, we know, he says in 1 John 5:2, "that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." I think that's very important. In our natural state, we see rules and regulations and commands as oppressive. They keep us from doing what we think we ought to do and want to do. They limit our freedom. We naturally rebel against law and rules. Even Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden rebelled against the

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one command God gave them of something not to do. They rebelled against that. Our fallen nature is excited by the commands of God itself, the law of God, that tells us "Thou shalt not..." do such and such. Something about that ignites our hearts to want to do it. It's the sad feature of the fallen nature of humanity.

Yet, he says here, that those who know Him and truly know His love will find that the commandments of the Lord "are not burdensome." Now, why is that so? They're not burdensome because we know they come from the very nature of the loving heart of God. If God loves us and God is love and God has told us to do something, He's done that for a reason. Following His commandments are good for us. They're the best things we could do. Therefore, when we follow the Lord's commands, our attitude changes if we realize they are coming from the heart of a loving God. That makes us see these in a very different light. They're not burdensome. They're not overwhelming. They are something that the loving Father has given us because He loves us.

Then we look at 1 John 4:7-8 in the context of what we talked about yesterday. It says in 1 John 4:8, "The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love." So, even a test of our faith that we truly know God is that we do love others and especially in 1 John 5, the people of God. If we don't love one another in the body of Christ, there is a missing piece here and John is suggesting that it's very likely that we don't know God at all.

Then in 1 John 4:7 it says, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." So, we have this test case so to speak concerning our very salvation that is resting in the fact that the Lord has changed us. He has changed us and the very essence of our hearts so that we love one another.

1 John 4:11 says, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." So, we do have a command here. He is saying that we should love one another because God is love and God is in us. Then he goes on to point us in the right direction. Here is a command of God. We ought to love one another. That's not a burdensome command. That's a wonderful command because that makes life what it ought to be and it obeys the Father and pleases Him and that's what God would have us do.

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So, that ought to give us a wonderful day in the Lord as we contemplate what He has done for us in His love and how He has called us to live.

September 7, 2023

Before we leave the subject of God and all of His greatness that we have been looking at for several weeks now, we are going to look at one more very precious attribute of God. His faithfulness. I think this one is very special to us because there is virtually nothing in this world that we can say is really faithful. Certainly there are people that are faithful and we will look more at that tomorrow. We ought to be faithful. God calls us to faithfulness. It's a wonderful feature in the life of a person that we can rely upon, can trust and that we know that they will not abandon us or turn their back on us. That's a wonderful thing, but it's a relatively rare thing. That's true of almost everything else. Inanimate objects, for example, work for a while and then they let us down. Things that we trusted, at some point, many times will fail us. So, we've learned not to trust a lot of things in this world because not a lot of things are trustworthy. So, when we come to God and we think about the fact that He is faithful. He is not fickle. He doesn't change at His every emotional whim like the ups and downs of life that you and I have. He's always the same yesterday, today, and forever. That is a beautiful attribute that we glory in and we thank the Lord that He is that way even if we are not.

The Scriptures talk often about the faithfulness of God. We see it often in the Psalms and throughout the rest of Scripture. There are a few verses that I would mention in the New Testament. One would be in 2 Timothy 2:13 when he says, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself." That's an interesting way to say that. Even if we fail Him, He remains faithful. Sometimes we think we have to be faithful so that we don't fail Him – and we shouldn't desire that, but even if we fail and in reality every time we sin is a failure on our part, He remains faithful. We can be overwhelmed by our failures because we are sinful people. The best of us fail and we sin very often. So, here we see that even if we fail, and prove ourselves faithless, and even if we doubt Him, He remains faithful because He cannot deny Himself. In other words, for God to not be faithful would be a denial of Himself and He cannot do that and still be God because God cannot deny Himself. Therefore, there is no chance, whatsoever, that God ever proves to be anything but faithful to you and me.

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I think of Hebrews 10:23 in which he says, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful." The Hebrews passage there encourages us to hang on to our confession of faith, probably even in times when we're not so sure that we can. When we're doubting. When we're struggling. He says, hang on to that and hold fast for He who promises to be faithful, the Lord, is not going to let us down. Ultimately, He is not going to turn His back on us. He is going to remain faithful to us no matter the circumstances of life.

Probably the best-known passage of Scripture in the Bible of faithfulness is right in the middle of Lamentations. In what is a difficult and sad book, we find this joyful part there in Lamentations 3:21-22 where he talks about this. He says, "This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope; the LORD's lovingkindness indeed never ceases, for His compassions never fail." So, he sees the love and compassion of the Lord never failing.

Then Lamentations 3:24 says, "They are new every morning;" then he says, "Great is Your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I have hope in Him.'" So, he says that the compassion and love of God cannot, and will not, fail. To that he clings. He clings to it because he says here that God's faithfulness is great. We're all familiar with one of the greatest hymns of the faith, *Great is Thy Faithfulness*. At our church, we sing that quite often because it is a reminder of this great truth that God is faithful. Great is His faithfulness. We glory in that and cling to that. We're not always faithful, but God always is and that should bring great joy and happiness to the heart of any of His children.

Tomorrow we will look at how we should apply this faithfulness to our own lives.

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September 8, 2023

Yesterday we discussed the attribute of God known as faithfulness. God is faithful. He's always faithful. He can never be anything but faithful. He's trustworthy. He's never in a bad mood. He's never up and down like we often are. He can always be trusted to turn to and know that He is there for us no matter what the circumstances of our life, including those times when we fail Him and might have our own personal doubts and struggles. He remains faithful and we can always turn to the one who is faithful. This is the last attribute of God before we move on to talk about Christ and who He is.

As we think about that, we think about the fact that we are to also be faithful. God is faithful and He calls His followers to be faithful as well. We're going to look at a few passages of Scripture that speak of that. One of my favorite passages is 2 Timothy 2:2 that says, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." As Paul sends Timothy out to minister and disciple those in his church and Paul himself is not with Timothy – this is the last book Paul wrote, and we believe Paul is in a dungeon somewhere – he is instructing Timothy about the future in his absence. He wants to make sure that Timothy understands that his primary task is to entrust to faithful men the things that Paul entrusted to him. We know that Paul received those things from Jesus Christ Himself. So, there is a trickle down, passing along effect. What kind of people is Timothy to identify and devote his time training and helping in their spiritual walk? Faithful men.

There's a lot of other things we could look for in a person. Abilities, giftedness, intellect, spiritual giftedness, but the one thing that Timothy is called to look for in men, that he would spend special time with, is "faithful men". Those who would pass it along to other men who are faithful as well, and would also take the Word of God and pass it along to others. I don't think we can speak more highly of faithfulness and faithful people than this. It is a central ability and characteristic of the men and women of God that He truly uses. There are people with great giftedness that have very little usefulness to the purpose of God and who have not been used to any great extent. Then there are people who have very little giftedness in certain abilities, but they are faithful, and the Lord uses them in wonderful ways in the lives of people. Faithful people.

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The next verse I look at is Revelation 2:10, He says, "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." We find that there is a reward for faithfulness. It says you'll get, "the crown of life." What that crown looks like and how that crown differs from some of the other rewards and crowns that God gives in the Scriptures, we're not altogether sure. It's a reward, a crown, and it has something to do with life. I don't think He is talking about eternal life necessarily, because we're saved by faith, and He is talking here to a group of people that are already Christian. Their faithfulness in the body of Christ and serving the Lord is going to be rewarded with something very special, the crown of life. Whatever the ingredients are that make up that crown, I cannot be certain, but it is going to be a wonderful crown.

Then I think of one more verse of Scripture, 1 Corinthians 4:2, "In this case moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy." Again, we are going back to what Paul said to Timothy in chapter 2 of 2 Timothy. The Lord uses faithful people. The Lord uses people He can trust and that He knows are going to stay on task and do the things He has called them to do. That's the kind of people the Lord wants to use. That's the kind of people He uses primarily, those that are trustworthy. Those stewards, those that are going forth and taking the message of their master, the stewards, what is their great characteristic? Trustworthiness. Faithfulness. They'll do what the master wants them to do. They're faithful to the task that they have been given. There's no ability, someone has said, like dependability, and the Lord wants to depend upon you and me to serve Him.

Faithfulness is a great gift that the Lord has given us the ability to do based upon His faithfulness. God calls us to be trustworthy and to be faithful and I hope you and I take that very seriously. I hope this little series on the attributes of God, and how they apply to our everyday lives, has been a wonderful blessing to you and has given you a wonderful time in the Lord.